

(b) and (c). In consonance with the policy to make optimal use of the national industrial infrastructure a number of low-technology and low-value added items were identified for off-loading to the civil sector in a phased manner. 17 clothing items were also identified for off-loading in phase I. A reversal of this decision is not presently contemplated.

[English]

### **Augmentation of Size of Merchant Fleet**

2856. SHRI CHITTA BASU: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to augment the size of the countries merchant fleet to reduce pressure on foreign exchange; and

(b) if so, the steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) This Ministry have taken a number of steps to assist Indian Shipping Companies. These include:—

(a) Streamlining of licensing procedures which has enabled quicker ship acquisition in the fluctuating International Market.

(b) Revised age norms for acquisition of second-hand vessels;

(c) Permitting Shipowners to acquire bulk carriers of 10–30,000 DWT without approaching the Ship Acquisition Licensing Committee;

(d) Proposals for replacement of existing tonnage will not be placed before the

Ship Acquisition Licensing Committee, if the replacement proposal is within 25% in excess of or less than the tonnage to be replaced.

(e) Permitting Private Shipping Companies to place orders on Indian shipyards without reference to assessed requirements.

(f) Simplification of procedure for charter out of vessels by shipping companies.

### **Exports and Imports**

2857. SHRI R. DHANUSKODI ATHITHAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the value of export and import targeted for the current financial year and the percentage of these to the Gross Domestic Production;

(b) the actual performance during this year so far;

(c) whether the Exim scrips have been found advantageous for encouraging exports; and

(d) if so, in what manner?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) The export target for the fiscal year 1991–92 was not fixed, in view of the uncertainties in the global trading environment, collapse of the erstwhile Soviet Union, a major trading partner of India, and the time lag for the far reaching policy reforms to have full impact on exports. No targets are fixed for imports.

(b) India's exports to General Currency area (GCA) countries amounted to Rs. 27133 crores during April–December, 1991 as compared to Rs. 18785 crores during April–December, 1990, thereby registering